



newsounds

The White-Tie Guy and the Nitty-Gritty Gal

By SCOTT HOLTZMAN

Last week, Daddy wouldn't dig it and Mama would have fainted a lot, but April 25th might just change the picture a little. You can thank LB and J. (Leonard Bernstein and Janis.)

It's going to be harder to maintain that kids are turning out trashy music when such an eminently respectable white-tie guy like Leonard Bernstein is coming on strong for the incredible, talented 16-year-old writer-performer Janis Ian. (She prefers to be called a "people-sketcher.")

Her controversial nitty-gritty-tell-it-like-it-is lyrics and delicate melody lines are enhanced by her sensitive voice and, of course, by Mr Bernstein's seal of approval. But don't let that scare you. She is what's happening and wouldn't change a line, Bernstein or no Bernstein.

TAKE "SOCIETY'S CHILD," the banned almost everywhere song that she's premiering on the CBS-TV Special at 9 PM Tuesday called "Inside Pop: The Rock Revolution." It has taken about a year for the song to be heard. It's not that Janis has compromised (not a line deleted), but just that finally the over-30 set is getting hipper... the kids got that way a long time ago.

I picked "Society's Child" as one of the most beautiful records of the year last year. I picked it because it is beautifully sung, an excellent production and arrangement and one of the most sensitively con-

structed songs ever to come out of pop music.

I didn't pick it because of its controversial inter-racial dating theme. I picked it in spite of it, knowing full well that my readers would never get a chance to hear it in this part of the country. The point that the bigots missed is that the girl decides for herself that she can't put up with the social pressures because she's only "Society's Child."

I'll let you judge for yourself on Tuesday night.

THE POINT I'D like to make is that Janis Ian is much more than that one song. Her songs speak frankly and openly as only this new generation has dared.

The anti-puritanism groundwork was laid by Dylan, The Beatles, Donovan and many more. Janis has taken the whole thing a step forward. She is the new voice of the new youth.

When she puts parents down, she doesn't strike out wildly with four-letter accusations (as do The Fugs). She does it with reason and insight and her lyrics will hit home with many youths and parents. Aware parents can only applaud. Others need to hear it anyway.

In "Mrs McKenzie" from her Verve LP (FTS-3017), she speaks of a kind of mother many of us have seen in action.

Here is an excerpt from her lyric: "Lady McKenzie/ she's in a frenzy/ for her children to leave so she can be free/ what a drag it must be feeling wanted/ she said if you've got a problem I'm not here to help you/ you've got your hang-ups it's not my fault pull yourself through/ how can you say you need me I'm only your mother/ I only work here please don't bother me/ teach yourself to be free."

IN "JANEY'S BLUES" Janis talks of an unloved child: "Janey's down/ can't get off the ground/ too low to fall/ she can't come up at all/ hey Janey's just an accident/ fatal mistake on the day after Lent/ and her parents say/ we don't need you today/ but we expect just the same/ she's got a bluesy feeling in her eye/ and it's making her sigh/ cry cry for Janey/ well her mother plays on the golf course every day/ and her daddy he sits at home and plays with the maid/ they found the perfect alibi/ stay together for the sake of the child/ you know divorce don't fit/ and they're too young to split/ think they're martyrs but they're killing the kid/ well they put her down/ and they knock it if she hits the ground/ next moment grab a purse and take her out on the town/ it's either a hit or a missin' fight/ a slap by day and a kiss at night/ you know they're hating sets them free/ and Mother only wants to see Janey taking sides..."

This is only a touch of Janis Ian. She is from a happy home herself. These are her observations of what goes on around her. Whatever the subject, Janis Ian is a "people-sketcher" with a keen eye and a mastery of music and lyric far beyond her 16 years.

She is the voice of the new generation and she's here to stay. What a pleasure it will be to watch her grow as an artist. It will be interesting to see what she is writing when she's too old to be "Society's Child."

SCOTT'S SNEAK OF THE WEEK: Watch for it on The Chuck Dunaway Show and The Larry Kane Show. This week it's "Lonely (Amy's Theme)" from The Lovin' Spoonful LP "You're a Big Boy Now" featuring John Sebastian on harmonica.



Janis Ian, above, pictured on the cover of her record album, "Janis Ian," is the object of the admiration of the much-admired Leonard Bernstein, left.



Jim McGuinn, above, of The Byrds is on TV. Check newsounds calendar for the when, and where.

newsounds calendar

TUESDAY

"Inside Pop: The Rock Revolution" with Leonard Bernstein, Janis Ian, Brian Wilson, Herman's Hermits, The Hollies and Jim McGuinn of The Byrds, 9 PM on Channel 11.

THURSDAY

The Surf Knights — Jane Long Junior High Gym, Annual Round-up.

FRIDAY

The 13th Floor Elevators — The Living Eye.
The Briks — Catacombs.
The Bedbugs — Bellaire City Gym.

The Fever Tree — Eddie Arce-neaux's, Lake Charles, La.

The Dimensions — Phillips Club-house, Pasadena.

The Rogues — The Vault, Pasadena.

SATURDAY

The Chessmen — Catacombs.
The 13th Floor Elevators — The Living Eye.

The Traits — Riverside Hall, East Bernard.

The Fever Tree — Eddie Arce-neaux's, Lake Charles, La.

The Dimensions — San Jacinto Junior College, Pasadena.

The swingers want to know where their favorite teen music groups are playing. Let newsounds calendar know and it will tell each Sunday in Modern Living. Mail in the name of the group, date, time and place of play-time; addressed to newsounds calendar, Modern Living, The Houston Post, 2410 Polk, Houston 77001.

A Groove-In Is On!

Three big shows of the "Grove-In" at The Houston Music Theatre in Sharpstown, will feature The Houston Post's BIG THREE: Neal Ford & The Fanatics, The Coastliners and The Fever Tree plus The Sixpentz, Thursday's Children, The A4-40, The Dimensions, The Surf Knights, The Glass Kans, The Countdown Five.

The times and dates for the Post show are:

Matinee: Saturday, May 6 at 3:30 PM.

Matinee: Sunday, May 7 at 3:30 PM.

Evening: Sunday, May 7 at 7:30 PM.

The Houston Post will give away at each performance:

One Avanti Motor Bike.

One Philco Portable TV.

One Philco Portable Stereo.

Transistor Radios and Sneak LPs from major labels.

Houston Post

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